

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5 and 7 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 5 and 7 are amended, and claims 4, 6 and 8 are canceled, without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. Claim 1 is amended to include the allowable features recited in claim 4. Further, claims 1, 5 and 7 are amended to correct minor informalities. Accordingly, no new matter is added. In view of at least the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4, 6 and 8. However, for at least the reasons discussed below, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance.

II. Request Acknowledgement of May 30, 2007 Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on May 30, 2007.

III. Objection to Claims 1 and 4-8

Claims 1 and 4-8 are objected to because of the following informalities: in claim 1, line 10; claim 4, line 7; claim 5, line 4; claim 6, line 4; claim 7, line 4; and claim 8, line 4, - to- should be inserted after joined. The cancellation of claims 4, 6 and 8 render the objections to those claims moot, and the objections to claims 1, 5 and 7 are respectfully traversed.

Applicants amend claims 1, 5 and 7 to include the word "to" after the word "joined," as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the amendments to claims 1, 5 and 7 overcome the objections. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the objections.

IV. Rejections of Claims 1, 5 and 7 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 5 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Muller (U.S. Patent No. 3,100,382) or Taylor (U.S. Patent No. 3,279,195). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants amend independent claim 1 to include the allowable features recited in claim 4. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 is patentable over Müller or Taylor. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection of independent claim 1.

Claims 5 and 7 depend from claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable over Müller or Taylor for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

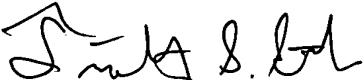
Thus, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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